

resources

TIPS!

ARTICLES

subtext

# LGBTQIA

ZONE

survival guide

brought to you by:  
commonground

AND

create...  
change

✂

WORDS 'N  
STUFF



create...  
change

LAKE MICHIGAN



EMBRACE  
DIVERSITY!



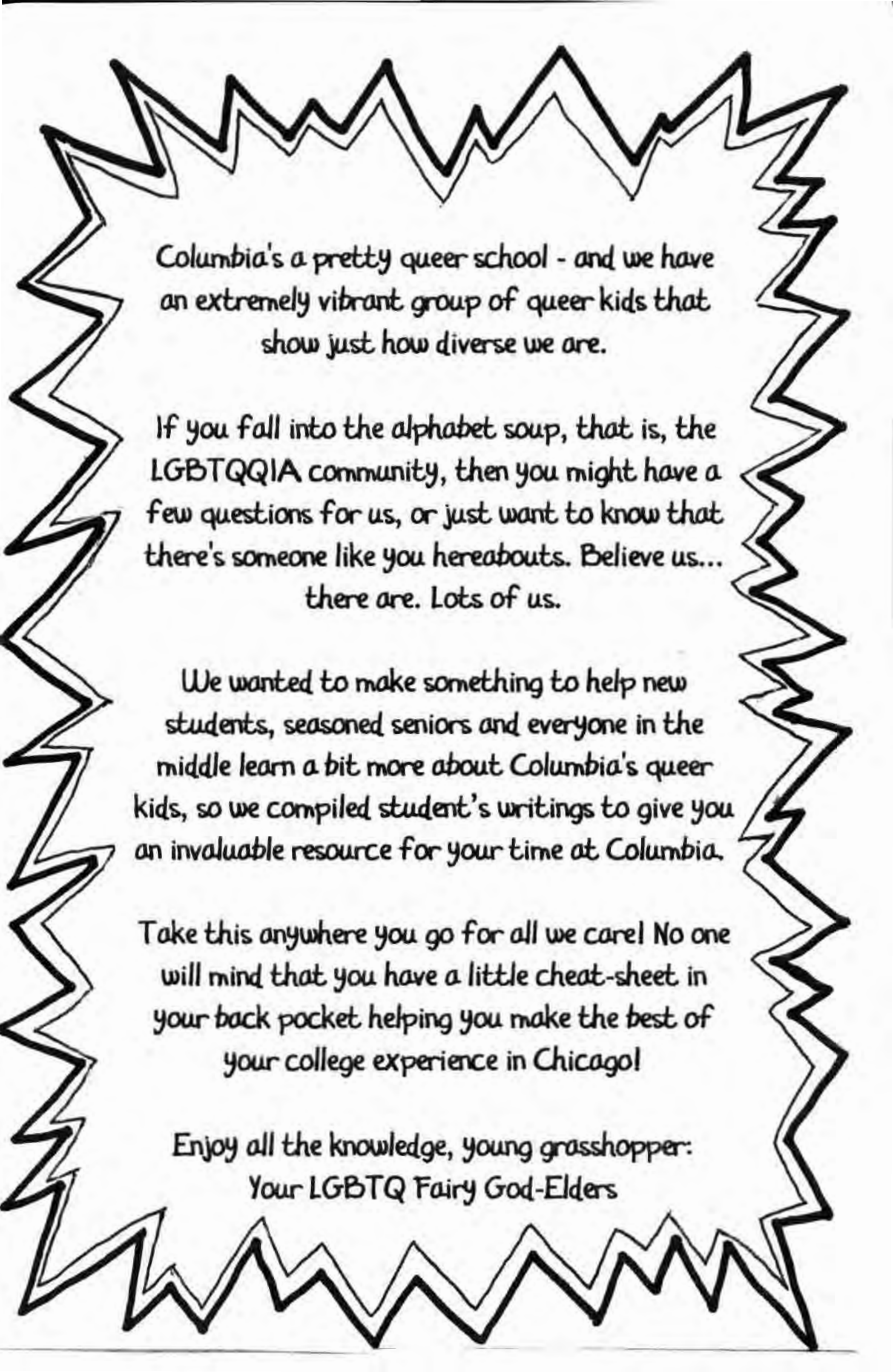
HONK  
IF YOU  
ALL PEOPLE

\*HONK\*

\*HONK\*

\*HONK\*





Columbia's a pretty queer school - and we have  
an extremely vibrant group of queer kids that  
show just how diverse we are.

If you fall into the alphabet soup, that is, the  
LGBTQQIA community, then you might have a  
few questions for us, or just want to know that  
there's someone like you hereabouts. Believe us...  
there are. Lots of us.

We wanted to make something to help new  
students, seasoned seniors and everyone in the  
middle learn a bit more about Columbia's queer  
kids, so we compiled student's writings to give you  
an invaluable resource for your time at Columbia.

Take this anywhere you go for all we care! No one  
will mind that you have a little cheat-sheet in  
your back pocket helping you make the best of  
your college experience in Chicago!

Enjoy all the knowledge, young grasshopper:  
Your LGBTQ Fairy God-Elders



# Behind The Biology: Lynette Foss

BY RUSSELL  
YOST

As someone who is not "out" to my parents, it is always risky exploring too many of the courses at Columbia. I've always wanted to try an LGBTQ history or literature but I was always scared of how my parents would react when they saw the transcript.

The only course that I thought would be acceptable as well as educational was "Biology of AIDS: Life of a Virus." I had no idea what to expect, but I figured it would be helpful to be educated about a very alive issue.

The class was, as I expected, very educational but the best part was the teacher, Lynette Foss. During the discussions, she would fuel them with insight but step out to let the class debate. She found amazing ways of comparing scientific vocabulary and mumbo-jumbo to real life situations. She made it understandable and cared so much about the subject matter. Quite possibly the most amazing thing about her is the passion she has for her students—her reason for teaching about HIV/AIDS.

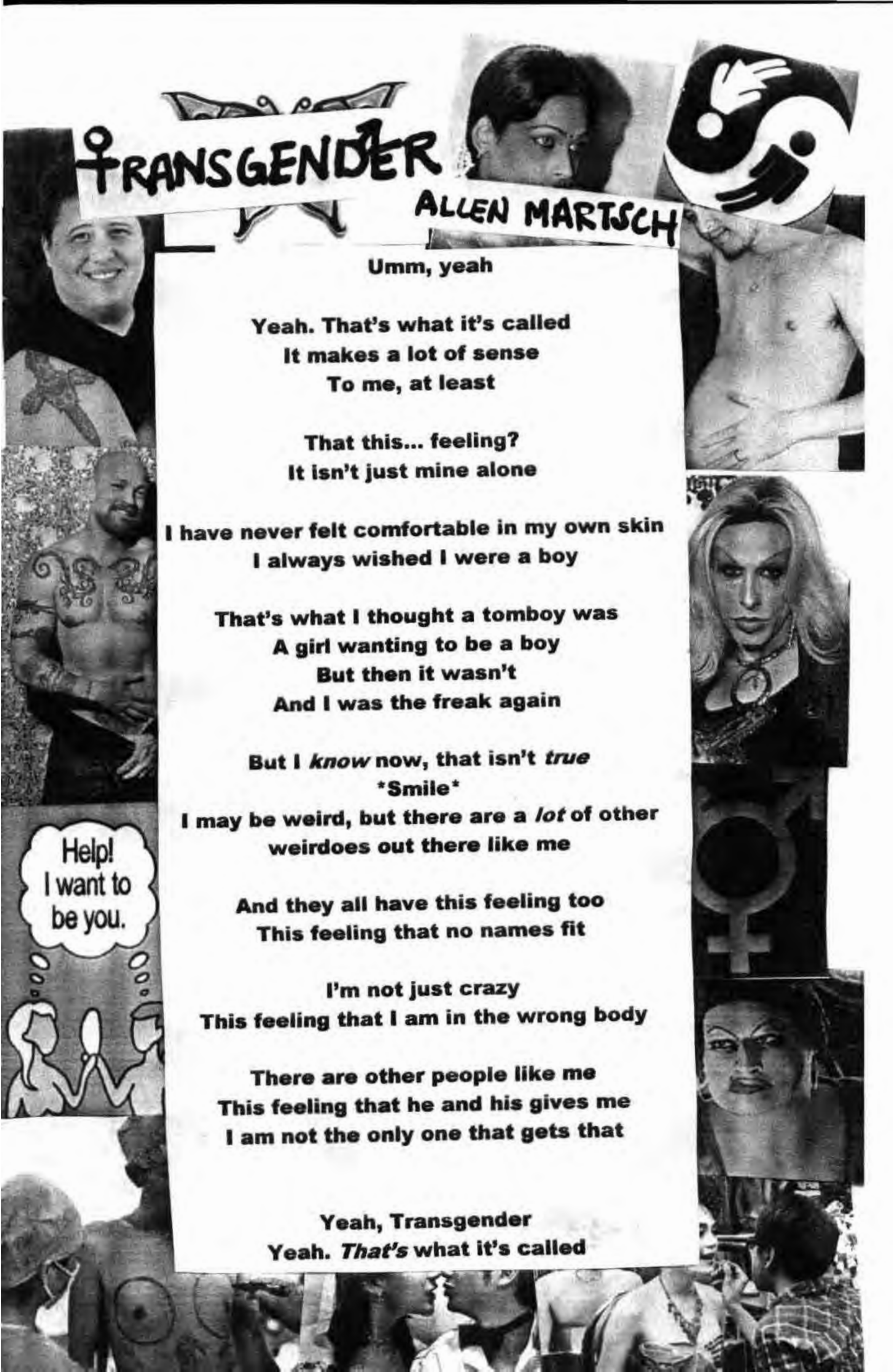
After the semester was over, I knew I needed to take another one of her classes. It was still science, it was still fun, and both of the classes have been some of my favorite Gen Eds.

She is a teacher that always talks to me when she sees me. She's always willing to stop and help out, to be an ally. I would advise anyone to take any course you see offered by LFoss because it is a privilege to have 3 credit hours with her; we could all use an Ally like her.



YOU'LL ♥ HER!!! ↗





# TRANS GENDER

ALLEN MARTSCH

Umm, yeah

Yeah. That's what it's called  
It makes a lot of sense  
To me, at least

That this... feeling?  
It isn't just mine alone

I have never felt comfortable in my own skin  
I always wished I were a boy

That's what I thought a tomboy was  
A girl wanting to be a boy  
But then it wasn't  
And I was the freak again

But I *know* now, that isn't *true*  
\*Smile\*

I may be weird, but there are a *lot* of other  
weirdoes out there like me

And they all have this feeling too  
This feeling that no names fit

I'm not just crazy  
This feeling that I am in the wrong body

There are other people like me  
This feeling that he and his gives me  
I am not the only one that gets that

Yeah, Transgender  
Yeah. *That's* what it's called

Help!  
I want to  
be you.



# PASSING TIPS

BY ALLEN MARTSCH

## 1. Wear blue.

Boys wear blue. If all you wear is blue, you are obviously a boy.

## 2. Talk about sports. All the time.

"How are you?" Fine, did you see the Bears last night? "What was the homework?" Didn't do it, was busy with The Sox's game. "Allen, you are interrupting class-" I WATCH TENNIS TOO. SERIOUSLY, all the time. I cannot stress this enough.



## 3. Ignore your appearance.

Roll out of bed, stuff your books in your bag, and sulk to class. You can avoid showers, and maybe even roll in the mud. The more dirt, the better. If your classmates aren't making an effort to sit farther away from you due to the smell, you aren't doing it right.



## 4. Laugh haughtily at feminine things.

Flowers? Ha. Butterflies? Hahaaa. Beauty? Pfffftttt. ART? ART?! AHAHAahaha aha ah.

TROUBLE GETTING YOUR GENDER-IDENTITY RECOGNIZED IN CLASS? TEACHERS USING THE WRONG NAME? PEERS MISUSING PRONOUNS? HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR GUYS (SORRY, LADIES).

## 5. Fight someone.

Establish your dominance in the classroom by picking a fight with another kid. The element of surprise is on your side. Nothing is more shocking than a punch to the face during The Oxford Comma powerpoint.

Sup, ladies?

## 6. Wear a mustache.

Nothing is more masculine than that burly bunch of man fuzz perched proudly on your upper lip. Looks of awe and respect from fellow males is a plus.



Still having trouble? Try this as a last resort.

## 7. Talk to them.

Email them, pull them aside after class, or correct them during class. Communicating with your peers and teachers will make everyone a great deal more comfortable. Don't expect people to know what you prefer or how you're feeling. Explain. Be respectful, but be persistent. They may not get it right away and may make mistakes, but they want to be out of the awkward situation just as fast as you do.

You have a right to your gender-identity. Don't be afraid to ask for it.

(I still strongly suggest the mustache though.)





# How To AVOID Your

So you and your partner broke up, and  
crazy! Well here are five

1. If they try to contact you, don't respond.

I know this sounds really hard, but it is so worth it! The best thing to do is get out of the situation... and I'm not talking about *Jersey Shore*. Keeping in constant contact with your ex will only encourage them to keep tabs on you. You are your own person. Keep it that way.

2. So you have the same friends. Do you just get new friends?  
No!

You're not a child. Your friends should understand that you don't want to be around your ex, Hang out with them at different times. Trust me, it's for the best. Nothing is more awkward than being stuck at a social outing with eyes on the back of your neck.

3. Get a new hobby!

Sounds silly, but it works. Try something new to get your mind off the break up. This way you have something you didn't when you were with your ex. You have no past with this new hobby so it can't relate to your past relationship. In many ways, this will help you get away from your ex and help you with the break up.



By: REBECCA PIERCE



# CRAZY EX ON CAMPUS

*you need to get away from the ways to avoid them!*

4. Explore! You've done the routine; it's time to branch out!

Go places you didn't think about going before. Try new coffee shops, thrift store, neighborhoods. BE SAFE, but go places! You have a U-Pass, now use it. Plus, it's always nice to venture out of downtown. Try going to places in Wicker Park, Boystown, Lincoln Park, and Andersonville.

5. Be mature.

I know you don't want to see your ex, but don't act immature about it. If you think this ex is a little off their rocker, you should be as mature about the break up as possible. If you see them, don't run away; simply keep going about your day. Eventually, they will take a hint. Breakups can be hard and messy, but it's all about standing ground. You have to promise yourself to be mature and do whatever it takes to help yourself through this time. Just make sure you're happy with the least amount of drama.



# HAVING A Gay Old Time

## A SURVIVAL GUIDE TO CHURCH

I was only six years old but I still remember the drive vividly. My dad, who had me every other weekend, had just picked me up from my mom and was driving me back to his apartment. The drive was long so I spent a majority of the time looking out my window at the passing buildings or billboards and I saw one that confused me.

I turned and asked my dad, "What does a Gay Church mean?" Covered by the innocence of childhood, I wasn't sure if "gay" meant two men kissing or "happy" like it says at the end of the Flintstone's jingle.

My dad turned his head and snapped, "Gay people can go to church too."

That wasn't what I meant. I didn't even realize there were different kinds of churches for different kinds of people. I remember feeling terrible, like I had somehow done something wrong by asking my dad a question.

It would be four more years before I would figure out that my dad was gay, and finally understand why he got so upset at me that day: he had been hurt because he was not openly welcomed by most churches.

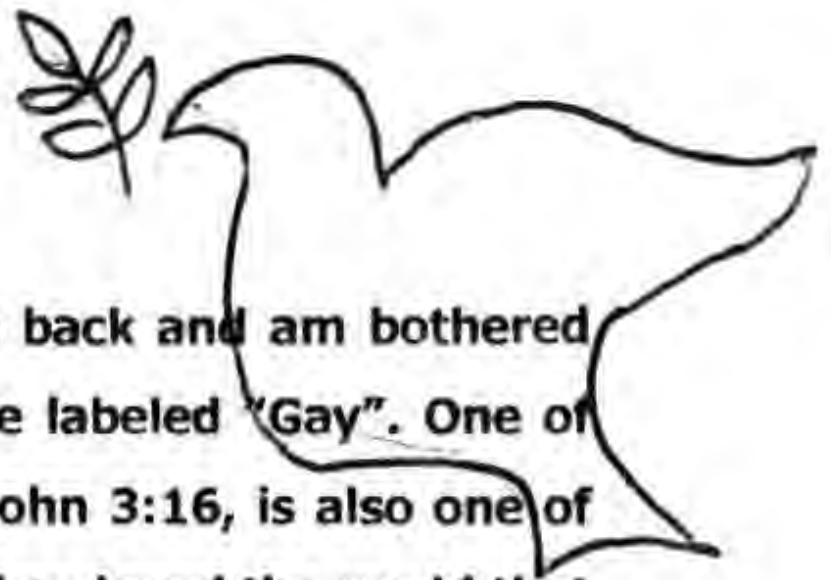
BY



Taylor Westlake

"...whoever believes in him... shall have eternal life."





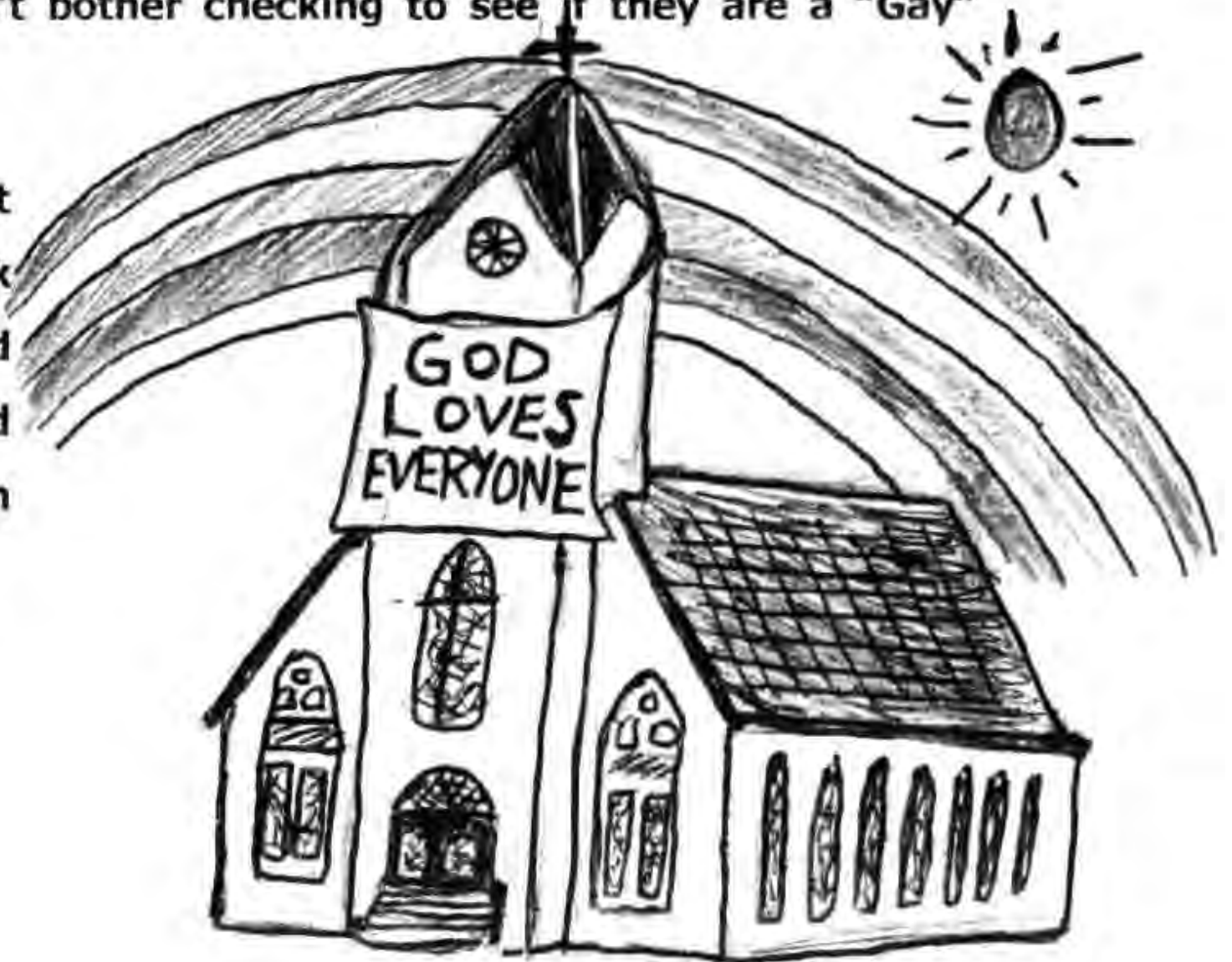
Since becoming a follower of Jesus, I look back and am bothered that there is still a need for a church to be labeled "Gay". One of the most well-known verses of the Bible, John 3:16, is also one of the most misunderstood. It reads, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whosoever believes in him, shall not perish, but will have eternal life."

"Whosoever," it reads; not "all but a few." If God accepts all, why doesn't the church? Why doesn't every church claim to be a "Gay" Church, an "Afro-Caribbean" Church, a "Hippie" Church, a "Trekkie" Church, a "Mom" Church, or a "Bro" Church?

For so long, Christians have given themselves the power to say who is and isn't welcomed in God's house. It's not right to tell people they are not welcome in a church that Jesus would have wanted them a part of.

I will be the first to admit that the church has done a bad job showing love to the LGBT community, but God welcomes "whosoever." So if you're interested in attending a church or get invited to one, don't bother checking to see if they are a "Gay" Church, just go.

If they are not welcoming, walk away. You are loved by a great God and don't let any church tell you otherwise.



# Sir

*Huh. That made sense.*

*Wait.*

*Say that again.*

*Yeah.*

*Yeah, why aren't people calling me that*

*That sounds awesome.*

*Ma'am sounds stupid*

**Sir... Sir** *is much better*

*Huh*

*Oh! Yeah, sorry. I'll have the number 5, no tomato*



**MORE FROM**

**ALLEN  
MARTSCH**

# Allen

*Breath in and out*

*Yeah. That sounds right.*



# YOUNG Lady

By Allen  
Marstock

This was usually my mom

I had done *something* to set myself off-track from getting to *full* Lady-dom

And *she* had to remind me "You *are* going to grow up to be a lady,  
better start acting like it now so they don't see you're faking"

The first time I remember this happening was when I was 8

I was with my friend Luke, a neighbor kid, and we were in his attic

His dad had built this elaborate train set up there

It was ungodly hot, and smelt like mold and burning rubber

It was awesome

But the *best* part was this hole that he had cut in the wall for the train

And if you made your way into this storage space behind the wall

You could actually see the train while it was in this little tunnel

You had to wait like 20 minutes for it to come around

It was *even* hotter back there than it was anywhere else

And you saw it for all of 8 seconds

So naturally:

*that's* where we spent most of our time

But it got very hot back there

So Luke would take his shirt off

And I would too

Because it felt better with a little breeze

We did this for a long time

But one day my mom came early to collect me

And found Luke and I half naked in the back closet

She stared at us for a second

"Young lady"

And promptly dragged me out by the arm



But, what did I do wrong?

Maybe when **ladies** grew up, they weren't allowed to be comfortable.

I didn't see Luke for a while after that

Maybe **ladies** weren't allowed to play when they got older.

But, I was allowed to have Kayla and Molly over...

Maybe **ladies** didn't sound like me at all.

# IT'S NOT EASY BEING **V**



ARTICLE + ILLUSTRATION BY RUSSELL YOST



WHERE DOES SOMEONE FIT INTO A WORLD CENTERED AROUND SEX, WHEN THEY'VE NEVER HAD THAT EXPERIENCE BEFORE? AS MUCH AS SOME PEOPLE MAY TRY TO DISGUISE THE FACT SO MUCH OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY IS ABOUT SEX, MY EXPERIENCE LIVING IN THIS COMMUNITY AS I HAVE THROUGH 3 AND A HALF YEARS OF COLLEGE PROVES THEM WRONG.

IT'S NOT LIKE I CARRY AROUND A SIGN THAT SAYS I'M A VIRGIN, BUT INSIDE I ALWAYS FEEL A TAD BIT LEFT OUT. WHEN I GO TO THE BARS TO DANCE, OTHERS GO TO HOOK UP. WHEN I THINK OF FUN AS STAYING IN WITH A MOVIE, OTHERS WOULD RATHER BE HAVING FUN IN SOMEONE'S BED.

IF YOU THINK I'M A VIRGIN BY CHOICE, YOU WOULD BE HALF CORRECT. IT MAY BE AN ACTIVE CHOICE TO CHOOSE FRIENDS OVER A ONE-NIGHT-STAND. I NEVER CHOSE TO HAVE SUCH A STRONG GUT FEELING ABOUT SUCH THINGS.

EVEN BEFORE I KNEW I WAS GAY I WAS A COMPLETE HOPELESS ROMANTIC. I CRY AT ROMANTIC COMEDIES AND, OF COURSE, WROTE SOME LOVE NOTES IN HIGH SCHOOL. BUT TO ME, BEING LABELED, AS I HAVE, AS THE HUSBAND TYPE IS A COMPLIMENT AND ALSO A NEGATIVE. WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE ME ON THE COLLEGE SPECTRUM WHEN MOST GAY MEN AREN'T LOOKING TO SETTLE DOWN? THEY WANT HOOK-UPS AND I WANT SOMEONE TO REPLACE MY BODY PILLOW WHEN I SLEEP.

SOMEDAY, BASED ON THE CONSTANT REASSURANCE OF MY CLOSE FRIENDS, I WILL FIND SOMEONE TO LOVE IN THE WAY THAT I DREAM OF OR SEE IN MOVIES. FOR NOW I GUESS I HAVE TO SETTLE FOR NOT KNOWING WHERE I FIT IN. THE IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THE CHOICE I HAVE MADE IS THAT I MAY NOT BE HAVING SEX, AND I MAY NOT ALWAYS BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE IN SOME CONVERSATIONS, BUT I DON'T HAVE TO BE SOMETHING I'M NOT AND THAT'S OKAY.

SO GO ON AND LET THOSE ROM-COM'S PLAY. MAKE HOMEMADE-MEALS FOR YOU AND A CRUSH. EVEN HAVE SEX IF YOU ARE READY, JUST PLEASE BE YOU!

SHUT UP

FREAK

Allen Martsch

Pfffttahahaahaha hahahaha ahhh

Sorry, I just find this funny

That's just a faster, cooler way of saying  
"You're *transgender*, and that's *weird*"  
And I want to be like "I *know* right?"

I want them to explain why it's weird  
"Well, you were a *girl*, and now you're a  
*boy*"

"You're catching on so fast. Good for  
you."

And see them explain why weird is bad  
"Well, there are more of *me* in the world  
than *you*."

"See, that's what gets me down. Cause I  
want to be *just* like everyone else.

But don't worry,  
You seem like you are doing a pretty  
good job with that."



# YOU'RE WEIRD

ALLEN MARTSCH



In elementary school I wasn't the most popular person

I was the girl who fought monsters on the blacktop with the boys,  
I didn't play house on the jungle gym with the girls

You were either a *girl* or a *boy*  
You did *this* or you did *that*  
But they didn't leave that up to you.  
You *are* a girl and you will do *this* or  
you *are* a boy and you will do *that*.

So, if you were a *girl* doing *boy* things, you were **weird**  
But, if I was a *boy*, this wouldn't be **weird**, right?  
I don't want to be **weird**  
So I want to be a *boy*.  
But, if you were a *girl* who wanted to be a *boy*, you were **weird**  
So from the get-go, I didn't stand much of a chance.

Cause **weird** was bad.  
You had to be *one* or the *other*  
Or you were nothing  
And no one wanted to play with nothing

So, in order to pretend with others, you had to pretend with  
yourself  
And then you got really good at it  
And then you forgot there was another option  
Because I'm normal, I'm not **weird**

# 12 WAYS TO GET YOU THROUGH YOUR WEEK

**1. The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow;** It's not just an overdone show tune, it's true! If the weather is horrible, wait for tomorrow and a ray of sunshine will remind you why you love Chicago so much.

**2. Fries solve everything!** DQ, Epic Burger, or Wing Stop, it doesn't matter just take a moment, indulge and lose yourself in dipping sauce.

**3. If you're fading in class, go to Caribou.** They have amazing teas (and I love the coffee.) Push the "pause" button on your life for a much needed break.

**4. Remember that you are at Columbia because you are special.** Every day, no matter how crummy you feel compared to every other hipster on campus remind yourself that you are special.

**5. Turn your iPod on full blast and dance on your way to class!** It may be hard at first blocking out all of the strangers but the right song will do the trick! (It's also a great way to avoid people asking for donations on the street.)

**6. Your best friend from high school, your puppy, kitty cat, or your family is missing you right now!** If ya don't think so, just imagine how often you think about one of them.

**7. Don't waste this campus.** Go to the library, the Loft, Multicultural Affairs, or the Underground Café. Study, hang out, and sometimes get free food. If your week needs a little more fixing than a bean bag, use 1 of your 10 free visits at Counseling services.





8. Turn off your phone for at least 10 minutes a day. Being in class doesn't count either...because it should be off then anyways. This is a nice way to stop worrying so much about whether the boy you like is gonna text you back.

9. I don't ever want to be an advocate for skipping class-- especially when it's important--I think everyone deserves a day off to sleep in, catch up on homework, explore the city, or to go to a campus event. (Just don't skip too much or right before the final!)

10. Go to the movies! There is no better time to get lost for 2 hours than at a movie theatre. It's an escape, a fantasy, and the popcorn is yummy with or without lots of butter. Don't go over budget with too many flicks but once or twice a month is totally allowed!

11. Think of this as your mother speaking..."Clean your room!" Yea, yea, I went there, but the life of college housing is a messy one and it is stressful to come home to a dirty apartment. Keep it kinda tidy so when you have a hectic week of projects, you don't end up calling in the team from Hoarders.

12. You may laugh, but my shampoo is sometimes my reason for waking up in the morning. I wasn't a LUSH-believer until I got a sample and now all my showers make me to the feel of showering under a waterfall. It's incredibly stress relieving, all natural, and good for girls and boys!



BY: RUSSELL YOST

LGBTQ  
office of  
culture  
and  
community

LGBTQ  
Commonground

WS

WORDS 'N STUFF

CHECK US OUT!

facebook.com/wordsnstuff  
ramenzine.com  
ramenzine.tumblr.com

cover art by Russell Yost  
layout and illustrations by  
Brielle Munizzi